

Agricultural Marketing
Office of the Deputy Administrator, Marketing Programs
Cotton Division
Grading Branch
Agricultural Commodity Grader (Cotton)
GS-1980-07
Quality Control Coordinator

SJ CN28

I. INTRODUCTION

The Classing Office carries out assigned Cotton Division Programs within a designated geographical area. Programs include the classification of cotton, market news services, statistical procedures incidental to quality estimates of the cotton crop and annual carryover, cottonseed sampling, and other marketing and allied regulatory responsibilities.

The incumbent serves as coordinator for all quality control data in the classing office on a shift of operation.

I. MAJOR DUTIES

A. Quality Control

1. Monitors the shift's Quality Control HVI checklot results to identify bias trends by line/or operation and consistency/inconsistency with in-house checklot results.
2. Monitors in-house checklot results throughout the shift for acceptable levels. Ensures that they comply with instructions. Determines appropriate action based on these monitoring results.
3. Uses a personal computer to provide results for shift operations of in-house checklots. Plots measurements and tallies charts/graphs from same results.
4. Monitors checklot information received from the Quality Control Section. Data for HVIs, classers, and classing supervisors is analyzed and the findings reported to the shift supervisor in a concise format.
5. Compares shift results with office results and Division results and provides comparisons to shift supervisor.
6. Monitors results by operators in an effort to identify possible problems in operation technique.

7. Monitors room temperature and humidity. Monitors cotton moisture as presented by line supervisor.
8. Maintains a record of HVI line offsets by time and date.
9. Maintains a record of current calibration cottons and checks individual line calibration values.
10. Prepares reports for shift supervisor.

B. Classing

Examines and evaluates cotton to determine its official U.S. class and acceptability in terms of quality and condition in accordance with official standards and related regulations. Examines samples of cotton by evaluating and comparing the color, preparation, and foreign matter (leaf, grass, bark, etc.) of each sample to arrive at a grade.

Factor 1. Knowledge Required by the Position Level 1-5, 750 pts.

Knowledge of cotton classification principles, methods, and standards, and skill in interpreting and applying cotton standards to class the full range of cotton samples handled by a classing office.

Knowledge of the characteristics of cotton, cottonseed, and cotton linters.

Ability to determine the color (hue, lightness, and chroma) and amount of leaf trash, and preparation (smoothness), which combine to indicate grade to be assigned to the cotton sample.

Skill in operating a microcomputer.

Factor 2. Supervisory Controls Level 2-2, 125 pts.

Supervision is provided by the Shift Supervisor. Assignments require provision of information to the Quality Control Supervisor, but primary accountability is to the Supervisor in charge of the shift. Assignments are carried out according to job duties and checks are conducted each day of shift operation by the Area Director or his/her designee.

The grader independently determines the classification of assigned cotton samples.

Factor 3. Guidelines Level 3-3, 275 pts.

The primary guidelines consist of official cotton standards (physical and descriptive). Written and oral instructions and definitions as well as interpretation of official grade are also used.

The employee uses extensive judgment, particularly in making borderline grade determinations. These judgments must be made rapidly (2 per minute) and generally without referring to either the physical or written descriptive standards for specific guidance.

Factor 4. Complexity Level 4-2, 75 pts.

The work consists of determining the classification of each sample of cotton. Grades are based on factors of color, leaf, and ginning preparation. There are 39 possible grades as well as several recognized reduction factors applicable to any of these grades.

These reduction factors vary from one location to another with harvesting practices and weather conditions. The classer must independently describe quality of every sample in all factors. The employee must look at both sides of each sample and make a final determination in accordance with regulations and instructions. All of this must be done rapidly and with a very high degree of accuracy.

Classification requires two of the five human senses: sight and touch. Memory, reasoning, and close concentration are required to a high degree. The classer sees the color, preparation, and foreign matter and also feels the foreign matter in samples.

Appearance of cotton standards must be remembered and the proper classification must be assigned to each sample.

Factor 5. Scope and Effect Level 5-3, 150 pts.

The work involves making final classification determinations on individual samples of lint cotton.

The classification directly affects the price or value of the 480-pound bale represented by the sample. The monetary valuation of the commodity for which the certification memorandum is issued affects the financial interest of producers, handlers, and buyers.

Factor 6. Personal Contacts Level 6-1, 10 pts.

Contacts include other employees in the office.

Factor 7. Purpose of Contacts Level 7-1, 10 pts.

The purpose is limited to the exchange of technical and administrative information related to the work. Coworkers are working toward a common objective: accurate cotton classification and instrument readings.

Factor 8. Physical Demands Level 8-2, 20 pts.

Duties require the incumbent to spend prolonged periods in figuring, calculating, and coordinating data, which is mentally and physically tiring. He/she will spend much time standing or walking on concrete floors and sitting at a computer terminal.

Classification of cotton is performed from a standing position. Classification of cotton is extremely demanding on the hands, arms, and shoulders since it involves the handling of about 1,600 portions of samples per day. Sample containers weighing 20 to 25 pounds are constantly moved by the employee. The classification process requires physical dexterity and mental alertness and is extremely tiring, both mentally and physically.

Factor 9. Work Environment Level 9-2, 20 pts.

The work environment exposes employee to crowded conditions. Moderate discomfort may be experienced due to presence of cotton dust.

TOTAL POINTS - 1445